

Obstruction Removal (Ac.) 500

DEFINITION

Removal and disposal of buildings, structures, other works of improvement, vegetation, debris or other materials.

PURPOSE

To safely remove and dispose of unwanted obstructions in order to apply conservation practices or facilitate the planned land use.

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

On any land where existing obstructions interfere with planned land use development, public safety or infrastructure. This standard is not intended for the removal of obstructions from aquatic environments.

CRITERIA

Obstruction Removal shall be planned, designed, and installed to meet all federal, state, local and tribal laws and regulations.

Remove obstructions by demolition, excavation or other means required for removal. Dispose of all debris from the obstruction removal so that it does not impede subsequent work or cause onsite or offsite damage.

Dispose of inorganic materials such as rock piles, boulders, stones, concrete or masonry structures and metal or concrete fence posts by reusing, removal or burial at approved locations.

Dispose of organic materials such as wooden fence posts, woody vegetation, and woody building materials by removal to an approved landfill or recycling center, burial at an approved location or burning. If burning is used, implement appropriate smoke management to protect public health and safety.

Dispose of trash and non-woody building materials in an approved landfill or recycling center.

When removing buildings, ensure that all utilities, such as gas and electric, have been shut off and disconnected from the structure before beginning demolition.

Prior to any work contact utility companies or the state one call system to identify the location of utility lines in the construction area and to arrange the shut off of utilities if necessary.

The removal of obstructions can expose toxic or polluted materials. If toxic or polluted materials are expected to be found during the obstruction removal, specify appropriate handling and disposal criteria in the plans and specifications

When removing obstructions that contain chromated copper arsenate (CCA) treated wood, do not burn the wood. Burning of CCA treated wood can release toxic amounts of arsenic into the air and ash that are very harmful to human and animal health. CCA treated wood should be buried in an approved landfill.

Reshape and regrade all areas disturbed by the obstruction removal so that they blend with the surrounding land features and conditions. Any foundations or below ground portions of the obstruction that remain in place shall have sufficient soil cover to meet the requirements of the planned land use. Compact fill areas according to site specific requirements.

Revegetate or otherwise protect from erosion disturbed areas as soon as possible after construction. Refer to NRCS Conservation Practice Standard 342, Critical Area Planting for seedbed preparation, seeding, fertilizing, and mulching requirements. Use vegetation adapted to the site that will accomplish the desired purpose. Preference shall be given to native species in order to reduce the introduction of invasive plant species; provide management of existing invasive species; and minimize the economic, ecological, and human health impacts that invasive species may cause. If native plant materials are not adaptable or proven effective for the planned use, then non-native species may be used. Refer to the Field Office Technical Guide, Section II, Invasive Plant Species, for plant materials identified as invasive species.

CONSIDERATIONS

Consider the potential effects of installation and operation of Obstruction Removal on the cultural, archeological, historic and economic resources.

The recycling or reuse of materials should be considered as the first option for disposal of materials from obstruction removal. Most woody debris can be recycled into mulch or other products. Recycling or other environmentally friendly options exist for the disposal of many other materials as well.

Demolition activities can generate large amounts of dust. Where necessary, use dust suppression techniques such as spraying water on the removal site to suppress dust.

Obstruction removal can result in the disturbance of large areas that are subject to erosion during the demolition process. Where necessary include provisions in the plans to control erosion and offsite sedimentation.

Obstruction removal often involves heavy equipment working in environmentally sensitive areas. Ensure that servicing and refueling of equipment is done in a manner that minimizes spills and volatilization.

Demolition of structures and the removal of debris can be a hazardous undertaking. This is especially true for the removal of downed and tangled trees. This type of work should be done by well qualified personnel with proper equipment following appropriate safety procedures.

Old buildings, structures and trees can provide habitat for wildlife. The potential for use by and presence of at-risk species should be considered and addressed prior to any obstruction removal activity. The presence of roosting birds and bats may also pose a health and safety hazard to workers that should be considered.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Plans and specifications shall be prepared in accordance with the criteria of this standard and shall describe the requirements for applying the practice to achieve its intended use.

Support data documentation requirements are as follows:

- Inventory and evaluation records
 - Assistance notes or special report
- Survey notes, where applicable

- Design survey
- Construction layout survey
- Construction check survey
- Design records
 - Physical data, functional requirements and site constraints, where applicable
 - Soils/subsurface investigation report, where applicable
- Design and quantity calculations
- Construction drawings/specifications with:
 - Location map
 - “Designed by” and “Checked by” names or initials
 - Approval signature
 - Job class designation
 - Initials from preconstruction conference
 - As-built notes
- Construction inspection records
 - Assistance notes or separate inspection records
 - Construction approval signature
- Record of any variances approved, where applicable
- Record of approvals of in-field changes affecting function and/or job class, where applicable.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

An Operation and Maintenance (O&M) plan shall be developed for this practice. The O&M plan shall be consistent with the purposes of the practice, its intended life, safety requirements, and the criteria for the design.

REFERENCES

U. S. Department of Labor. Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Safety and Health Regulations for Construction, 29 CFR 1926. U. S. Washington, DC.